



URBAN DISTRICT OF CONSETT.

Interim Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the Year 1942.

To the Chairman and Members of the Consett Urban District Council:-

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

The report as in previous War years is an interim one. The year was again a satisfactory one from the point of view of Public Health. There were no outstanding causes of sickness and the Vital Statistics favourably compare with those of similar areas. The Crude Death-rate (11.9) is slightly higher than in 1941, whilst the Infant Mortality Rate is lower (59.6). The Tuberculosis Death-rate was about the same and the Zymotic Death-rate, though higher than in the two previous years, is still among the lowest recorded for your area.

Again it has been possible to attain 100% meat inspection, due to centralised slaughtering, and it is greatly to be hoped that this will continue after the War.

Health Propaganda, mainly directed towards diphtheria immunisation, has had satisfactory results, 75.2% of children under 15 years of age had received the recommended two doses of Alum Precipitated Toxoid by the end of the year.

Housing problems form one of our greatest difficulties, as the supply by no means meets the demand, and the cessation of building has aggravated the shortage enormously.

Casualty Services, Civil Defence, have been maintained by training to a high degree of efficiency, and whilst fortunately there has been no call on their services for our own needs, I feel sure they can render a good account of themselves should the necessity arise.

The Staff of your Health Department have all contributed to a year of progress, their keenness in Public Health work is a pleasure to record. The assistance of the Clerk to the Council and of the Officials and Staffs of your other Departments is gratefully appreciated. The support of the Chairman and Members of both the Health Committee and the whole Council helps the good work, greater perhaps than is generally realised. Changes are imminent and post-war reconstruction is to the forefront and I feel sure we only interpret the wishes of the Council by intelligent anticipation of events, and at any rate, we do no harm in "being prepared".

I am,  
Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

J. G. WALKER,

Medical Officer of Health.

23rd. August, 1943.

Health Department,  
Council Offices,  
Leadgate.



CONSETT URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Interim Report of the Medical Officer of Health for  
Year ending December 31st. 1942.

Summary of General & Vital Statistics.

Area in Acres	9,840
Population (Census 1931)	38,046
Population (Mid-Year 1942)	36,210
Number of Inhabited Houses according to rate books	10,204
Unreduced rateable value	£197,213
Reduced rateable value	£158,297
Sum represented by a penny rate	£ 601
Births during the year	671
Birth-rate	18.5
Deaths during the year	433
Crude death-rate	11.9
Infantile mortality rate	59.6
Tuberculosis death-rate	0.58
Pulmonary tuberculosis death-rate	0.34
Non-pulmonary tuberculosis death-rate	0.24
Zymotic death-rate	0.24

Special Causes of Sickness.

There were no special causes of sickness during the year.

Extracts from Vital Statistics.

	Total	M.	F.	Birth-rate per 1,000 of
Live (Legitimate	644	339	305	) the estimated resident population 18.5
Births (Illegitimate	27	11	16	
Total Live Births )				
Legitimate & )	671			
Illegitimate )				
Still (Legitimate	36	11	25	) Rate per 1,000 total (Live Births (Illegitimate Nil Nil Nil ) & Still) births 50.9
Births (Illegitimate	Nil	Nil	Nil	
Deaths from all Causes	433	232	201	) Death-rate per 1,000 of the ) estimated resident population 11.9
Deaths from Puerperal Causes				
No. 29 Puerperal Sepsis		Nil	)	Rate per 1,000 total (Live & Still) births 2.8
No. 30 Other Puerperal Causes		2	)	
Death-rate of infants under one year of age:-				
All infants per 1,000 live births				59.6
Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births				60.5
Illegitimate " " " illegitimate " "				37.0
Deaths from Cancer (all ages)				59
" " Measles				1
" " Whooping Cough				1
" " Diarrhoea (under 2 years)				5
Population estimated by the Registrar General				36,210

Causes of Death in Consett Urban District  
1942.

Causes of Death.	Males	Females
All causes:-	232	201
1. Typhoid and para-typhoid fevers	"	"
2. Cerebro-spinal fever	"	"
3. Scarlet Fever	"	"
4. Whooping Cough	"	1
5. Diphtheria	2	"
6. Tuberculosis of respiratory system	5	7
7. Other forms of tuberculosis	4	5
8. Syphilitic diseases	2	"
9. Influenza	3	2
10. Measles	1	"
11. Acute Polio-myelitis and polio-encephalitis	1	"
12. Acute infantile encephalitis	"	2
13. Cancer of buccal cavity)	1	"
"      " uterus          )	"	3
14.      "      " stomach and duodenum	9	4
15.      "      " breast	"	5
16.      "      " all other sites	24	13
17. Diabetes	0	3
18. Inter-cranial vascular lesions	22	29
19. Heart disease	61	48
20. Other diseases of circulatory system	6	4
21. Bronchitis	14	4
22. Pneumonia	14	8
23. Other respiratory diseases	2	3
24. Ulcer of stomach or duodenum	1	"
25. Diarrhoea under 2 years	4	1
26. Appendicitis	"	"
27. Other digestive diseases	1	8
28. Nephritis	10	9
29. Puerperal and post-abortion sepsis	"	"
30. Other maternal causes	"	2
31. Premature birth	7	5
32. Congenital malformity, birth injuries etc.	3	3
33. Suicide	"	"
34. Road traffic accidents	2	1
35. Other violent causes	9	3
36. All other causes	24	28

Deaths from the Principal Infectious Diseases.

Measles	1
Whooping Cough	1
Diarrhoea (under 2 years)	5
Smallpox	"
Scarlet Fever	"
Diphtheria	2
Fever (enteric, typhus etc.)	"
Total	9



Zymotic Death-rate per 1,000 population	0.24
" " for the Administrative County	0.26

The rate is higher than the record low rate (0.11) last year, the increase being accounted for by the increased number of deaths in children under two years from diarrhoea.

#### Infant Mortality Rate.

There were 40 deaths of infants under one year of age, which gives an infant mortality rate of 59.6.

Infant Mortality Rate	Consett Urban District	59.6
" " "	Administrative County	54.0
" " "	England & Wales	49
" " "	148 Towns with population	
	25,000 to 50,000	46

#### General Provisions of Health Services in the Area.

Staff of the Public Health Department:-

- (a) Medical Officer of Health, John G. Walker, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

Offices and duties:- Wholetime Medical Officer of Health for the joint areas of the Consett Urban and Lanchester Rural District Councils in accordance with the Memorandum on the duties of Medical Officers of Health and the Sanitary Officers Order 1935.

- (b) Chief Sanitary Inspector:- F. Stringfellow.  
Certificate of R.S.I. for Sanitary Inspectors.  
Certificate of R.S.I. for Meat & Food Inspectors.

- (c) Additional Sanitary Inspectors:-  
H. Walton, Certificate of S.I.B. and Meat Certificate.  
W. Telford, " " " " " "

- (d) Shops Inspector:- R. P. Jope.

- (e) Clerical Staff:- Clerk - Miss P.E. Barrow.  
Junior Clerk (Temporary) T.E. Hodgson.

Temporary Clerks - Civil Defence:-

Mrs. M. S. Ridley, Mr. W.L. Armstrong.

The Health Services available in the area are detailed in the report for 1938, to which reference should be made for further information.

#### Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.

##### Water Supply.

The public water supply controlled by the Durham County Water Board was ample throughout the year. Proper and sufficient water supplies were provided to a number of cottages. Considerable progress has been made in the last few years in providing public water to premises formerly having an unsatisfactory or intermittent supply. A total of 21 inspections were made in respect of this work.

Emergency Supplies. Two satisfactory emergency water supplies have been noted in case of necessity, but fortunately these were not required during the year.

##### Drainage & Sewerage.

A number of small alterations were carried out in various parts of the area to prevent flooding and no extensive trouble was experienced during the year. At one point storm overflows were lengthened in order to prevent pollution of ditches in fields to which dairy cows had access. One house formerly discharging

drainage to a cesspool was connected to the sewer.

### Closet Accommodation.

Apart from the provision of a few additional water closets there has been little change in the accommodation provided. Only three privy conversions have been carried out. At December 1942 the totals were approximately as follows:-

Water Closets	9,788
Ash Closets	607
Ashpit Privies	494

### Public Cleansing.

There have been no changes in the method of house refuse removal since amalgamation, the work being carried out partly by direct labour and partly by contract. Galvanized bins form the main type of receptacle in use for the storage of house refuse and these are cleansed weekly. The refuse is disposed of by tipping.

### Sanitary Inspection of the Area.

The following table gives details of the work done under the various headings for the year 1942:-

Public Health Acts etc.	Informal Notices	Formal Notices	Nuisances abated after notice.
Dwelling (Foul conditions	3	-	3
houses (Structural Defects	252	2	192
(Overcrowding	12	-	3
Dairies & Milkshops	1	-	1
Cowsheds	45	-	45
Bakchouses	2	-	2
Ashpits & Privies	10	-	10
Deposits of refuse and manure	12	-	12
Water Closets	19	-	19
House drainage faults	75	4	74
Water Supply	12	-	8
Other Nuisances	7	-	7
Totals	450	6	376

### Precautions against Infectious Diseases.

Houses visited following infectious disease and disinfectants etc. supplied	101
Lots of infectious bedding stove or destroyed	1
Library books disinfected	31
Schools disinfected	3

### Factories Act 1937.

A total of 49 inspections were made of various factories in the area and 5 notices were served with reference to defects needing attention:-

Defective water closets renewed	1
Ash closets converted to water closets	1
Additional water closets provided	2
Screen to urinals provided	1

#### Shops Act 1934.

Altogether 57 visits were made to various shops and in 12 cases unsatisfactory features were remedied by the owners or occupiers concerned:-

Defective water closets	8
Unsatisfactory drainage	2
Accumulations of refuse	2

#### Schools.

On three occasions various classrooms and schools were disinfected but no schools were closed on account of infectious disease.

#### Housing.

A Land Army Hostel was erected in Villa Real but no houses were provided either by the Council or by private enterprise. The demand for houses is very great. In many cases houses are occupied by more than one family and disputes in these circumstances are inevitable.

#### Unfit Houses.

Number of separate tenements in respect of which Closing Orders were made	3
Number of dwelling houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made	Nil
Number of dwelling houses in respect of which the owners have given Undertakings not to use the houses for human habitation	2
Number of houses actually demolished	Nil
Number of separate tenements in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or rooms having been rendered fit	1

The ordinary repair of houses is a very difficult question in present circumstances and complaints from occupiers are frequent. In many cases it is not easy to get contractors, but wherever necessary, owners are being urged to carry out works which will at least render the houses reasonably fit for habitation.

#### Overcrowding.

Fourteen cases were dealt with during the year and three of the families concerned were rehoused, two by the North Eastern Housing Association and one by the Council.

#### Milk Supply.

The following premises and persons were registered under the Milk & Dairies Order 1926 and Milk Special Designations Order 1936:-



Cowkeepers	57
Farms registered as Dairies	57
Other registered Dairies	26
Wholesale producers only	16
Retail purveyors of milk only	68
Retail purveyors of milk from other areas	26
Accredited producers	17

Licences issued by your Council include two Dealers and one Supplementary Licence in respect of the sale of Pasteurised Milk and one Supplementary Licence for the distribution of Tuberculin Tested Milk. Altogether 178 visits of inspection were made to byres, dairies and milkshops and any defects found were brought to the notice of the occupiers. Some much needed improvements were carried out at our request at Mains Farm, Ebchester and Pont Farm, Leadgate. The new arrangements for the more economic retailing of milk came into force at the end of the year. Twelve samples of milk were taken for analysis, nine of which proved to be very satisfactory and three unsatisfactory. The farms concerned were visited and suggestions for improvements were made.

#### Meat & Other Foods.

Two Government Controlled Slaughter Houses were used throughout the year for the slaughter of animals to supply the Consett Urban Area and the adjoining Lanchester Rural Area. Again a hundred per cent examination was carried out and below are given particulars relating to the various animals dealt with

Bulls	50
Bullocks	681
Cows	502
Heifers	829
Calves	675
Pigs	204
Sheep & Lambs	<u>10,351</u>

Total. 13,292

The following animals brought in for slaughter as casualties are included in the above figures:-

Cattle other than cows	29
Cows	102
Calves	33
Pigs	65
Sheep	<u>82</u>

Total 311

Under the Tuberculosis Order 1938, eleven dairy cows were sent in for slaughter by the Ministry of Agriculture's Veterinary Officers.

Diseased or Unsound Meat: Details of carcasses, organs etc. found to be diseased or otherwise unfit for human consumption are given in an attached statement.



100

**Total Carcasses, etc. found to be unfit for human consumption during the year 1942**

	CARCASSES ETC.				LUNGS			OX HEARTS	LIVERS			HEADS		PLUCKS		COWS UDDERS
	Beasts	Calves	Sheep	Pigs	Ox	Sheep	Pig		Ox	Sheep	Pigs	Sheep	Pig			
Tuberculosis .....	61 + 20 qrs.	4	...	1 + 2 qrs.	297	...	2	21	36	...	...	119	13	...	3	4
John's Disease .....	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Actinobacillosis .....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...
Pericarditis .....	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
(Septic & Traumatic)																
Septic Conditions .....	7 + 14lbs.	1	3 + 17lbs.	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...
Pneumonia .....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	10	...	...
Pleurisy & Peritonitis ...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Cirrhosis .....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	189	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Cavernous Hemangioma	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4	24	...	...	...	...	...	...
Mastitis .....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Swine Erysipelas .....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Oedema & Emaciation	2	4	7	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Parasites .....	...	...	...	...	1	5	...	...	1	33	...	...	...	25	...	...
Dead, Moribund, Imper- fect Bleeding, etc. ....	...	3	11	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Immaturity .....	...	6	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Decomposition .....	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
Blackleg .....	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
jaundice .....	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Bacillary Necrosis .....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Traumatism .....	568lbs.	10lbs.	96lbs.	80lbs.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
TOTALS:	79 + 20 qrs. + 582lbs.	19 + 10lbs.	21 + 113lbs.	5 + 2 qrs. + 80lbs.	299	5	2	24	232	57	...	121	13	36	5	48



Imported Meat: The number of carcasses and tinned foods distributed to the trade were as follows:-

Quarters of Beef	5,235
Sheep & Lambs	19,834
Pigs	325
Tinned Corned Beef	15,632

Private Slaughtering: Sixty-one pigs were examined on private premises in various parts of the area following slaughter for home consumption under licence from the Ministry of Food. One pig was found to be diseased and the owner voluntarily surrendered it.

Other Foods: Considerable time has been given to the inspection of tinned goods and other various foods and the following list shows the types of foodstuffs found to be unsound or otherwise damaged and unsaleable:-

Meats	438 tins	Cheese	74 lbs.
Tomatoes	117 "	Butter	50 "
Vegetables	141 "	Sausage	50 "
Fruit	128 "	Bacon	39 "
Fish	26 "	Datella	28 "
Milk	65 "	Eggs	197
Soups	11 "	Chocolate	348 bars
Jams	5 "		

In accordance with a circular issued on the subject, details of unsound or damaged foods discovered and exceeding certain stated quantities are given to the Ministry of Food, and the following foodstuffs were dealt with on these lines:-

Cheese	146 lbs.
Sago	128 "
Cooked Hams	48 "
Margarine	38 "

Damaged by fire and water:-

Flour	58 sacks
Malt	20 "
Bi-carbonate Soda	1 cwt.

#### Food & Drugs Act 1938.

Many visits were paid to premises registered by your Council under the Act, and altogether a total of 153 inspections were made. In 7 cases defects were brought to the notice of the occupiers and were remedied.

#### Prevalence and Control over Infectious and Other Diseases.

There were 551 cases of infectious disease (excluding tuberculosis) notified in 1942, which compares favourably with 609 in 1941 and 1,586 in 1940. The reduction is largely due to a decline in measles and whooping cough. The following table shows the numbers of cases notified and the numbers admitted to either isolation hospitals or already in an institution:-



Disease	Number of Notifications.	Number admitted to Hospital.
Scarlet Fever	83	50
Diphtheria	18	17
Erysipelas	19	1
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	1	1
Puerperal Pyrexia	10	8
Pneumonia	40	3
Cerebro-spinal Fever	4	4
Acute Polio-myelitis	2	2
Measles	299	6
Whooping Cough	75	2
Totals	551	91

Non-civilian cases are not included in these figures.

Scarlet Fever: There was an increase in the number of cases which was 83 for the year compared with 32 in 1941 and 28 in 1940. The type of disease was mild and free from complications and deaths. A large proportion of cases (40 per cent) were satisfactorily treated at home by their own family Doctors and "return" cases were absent.

Diphtheria: There were 18 cases of diphtheria during the year. This is the same number as in the previous year. Three of the cases were adults working in institutions and the remaining 15 were children under 15 years of age. Two of these 15 had received two injections of Alum Precipitated Toxoid more than 12 weeks before the onset of the disease and 13 had not been so treated. The clinical type of the disease in the 2 treated children was extremely mild, one was nursed at home and one was removed to hospital, not on account of the disease but because home conditions were unsatisfactory. Both cases made a rapid recovery without complications. Two of the thirteen non-immunised children died.

Diphtheria Immunisation Campaign: Good progress was made with this work and the estimated percentage of children treated by two injections of A.P.T. in your area at the end of 1942 was -

Under 5 years of age	1,903	=	61.3 per cent
Five to 15 years of age	5,770	=	81.2 " "

This is very satisfactory and progress is still being made. There are good reasons for believing that the influence of immunisation is becoming apparent, as the average number of cases per annum during the last 3 years has fallen to 15.3 compared with 103.3 for the previous 3 year period.

Scabies: Considerable progress has been made in dealing with this complaint. The services of the women Civil Defence Workers of the Casualty Services have been utilised and the Cleansing Stations of the same service are available if needed. Most of the cases dealt with have bathing facilities in their own houses and the treatment is carried out there. The work commenced in June 1942 and by the end of the year 444 cases and 387 contacts had been dealt with. The cases are visited and revisited at intervals and the vast majority conscientiously carrying out the advice given are soon free of the complaint. A minority of the careless type, relapse, and have to be dealt with again, but usually the suggestion of Institutional treatment is effective in securing more active co-operation. Notification of the complaint is voluntary and most practitioners give the information freely, other sources being the School Medical Authority, Enquiry Officers and Headteachers.

Tuberculosis: The number of new notifications during 1942 was 39. The position is shown in the following table, which gives the notifications etc. since 1938:-

Year	Total Notif- ications.	Pulmon- ary.	Non-pul- monary.	Deaths.	Recov- ered.	Removed from Area.
1938	49	23	26	27	13	6
1939	49	35	14	23	-	4
1940	30	25	14	13	10	6
1941	39	26	13	18	10	7
1942	39	17	22	12	4	7
Totals	215	126	89	93	37	30

The state of the register at the beginning of 1938 was 99 pulmonary and 85 non-pulmonary cases, at the end of 1942 the corresponding figures were 129 and 110.

The housing of tubercular families has received considerable attention in your district for many years, and whilst war conditions have slowed up the process of re-housing, owing to the cessation of building, a number of families in bad circumstances have been dealt with and the Housing Department provided with a list of suitable cases for re-housing as circumstances permit.

Venereal Disease: The Council has shown a keen interest in this important subject and are at present considering the type of propaganda to employ. It is very difficult to estimate how this district is affected and enquiries are being made from Medical Practitioners, but results in this quarter so far would suggest that it is comparatively rare. There is of course the possibility that sufferers do not go to their usual Doctor. The nearest treatment centres provided by the County Council are about 1.4 miles distant. One case brought to our notice under Regulation 33b, was referred to the County Medical Officer. Further enquiries are being made, and if it should be established that there is any great prevalence of disease in the area, the Council would be advised to ask for nearer treatment facilities than exist at the present time.

